

## **AMHERST COUNCIL ON AGING**

Fiscal Year 2008

### **MEMBERSHIP CHANGES**

#### **Departures**

- Elsie Fetterman completed six years of service after volunteering for two terms 2002-2008.
- Thomas McAuley, who was appointed in July 2005, resigned just prior to his term ending because he moved to a retirement community in South Hadley.
- Janet Gorth, appointed in June 2007, resigned in March 2008, as she found that she was overextended between her personal and community volunteer responsibilities.
- Stephanie O'Keeffe had to resign from the COA when she was elected to the Select Board.

#### **New Members**

- Kathy Koplow, Property Manager of the Clark House, was appointed for a three-year term beginning July 2008.
- Juana Trujillo, Support Service Coordinator for the Amherst Housing Authority, was appointed for a three-year term beginning July 2008.
- Attorney Joan Golowich was first appointed March 31st to fill Janet Gorth's remaining term ending June 30th, 2008, and then reappointed to a full three-year term beginning July 2008.
- Retired Amherst College Physics Professor Joel Gordon was first appointed March 31st, 2008, to fill Tom McAuley's remaining term ending June 30th, 2008, and then reappointed to a full three-year term beginning July 2008.

### **FY 08 HIGHLIGHTS**

- Lisa White, RN, BSN, was hired in August, 2007, as the Senior Health Services Director for the Senior Center. Funding for her position is primarily provided by a \$10,000 annual grant by community donors, Joseph and Dorothy Gavin. Additionally this year, two other grants were received to begin offering outreach nursing services: \$5,000 from Cooley Dickinson Hospital and \$1,625 from The Amherst Club.
- After years of planning by Attorney Deb Jankowski, the Amherst Finance Director, the Senior Center Director and COA members, a new fundraising 501C-3 corporation called "The Friends of the Amherst Senior Center" was formed. The process has included approval by the Attorney General and a Town Meeting vote to accept the about-to-be-dissolved 501C-3 "Senior Trust" monies and an immediate vote to allow the funds to be transferred into the new "Friends of the Amherst Senior Center" control. This solved a long-standing problem with the Senior Trust's organizational structure.
- COA member, Stephanie O'Keeffe, led the annual COA member & Senior Center staff retreat in October which looked at all Senior Center programs and services to see how they are funded, how much staff time they take and their impact on elders. A brainstorming session on enhancing resources followed.
- The Council on Aging celebrated the 40th Anniversary of its establishment by Town Meeting. The occasion was marked by a special social held December 14th at the Bangs Community Center.
- The Senior Center/COA held its annual Volunteer Recognition Social in June. FY 08 saw the largest number of volunteers ever: 301. The Eveline Sears Senior Activist Awards for this year went to **Jean Schoen**, who has delivered Meals on Wheels for 15 years, and **Thomas McAuley**, who has served in various capacities as a COA member 1987-1990 & 2005-2008,

as Senior Trust Treasurer 1987-1991, and as a volunteer host and Meals on Wheels program assistant 2005-2008.

### **FY 09 FUTURE PLANS**

- The COA and Senior Center staff are planning a special banquet at the Bangs Community Center on Sunday, October 19th, 2008, to celebrate the 40th Anniversary of the Senior Center. In addition, materials are currently being researched to create an historical booklet looking back at the last forty years and highlighting the Senior Center's current programs and services.
- A COA ad-hoc study group has been formed to begin preparation for a 2010 comprehensive survey of Amherst elders to better understand the issues they face and what they anticipate their needs to be. Similar surveys have been conducted by the COA every ten years since 1970.
- The spiraling cost of living for elders on fixed incomes challenges the capacity of the three Senior Center staff to provide adequate support services. Fundraising, grants and creative community partnerships are being explored to fill the gap created by dwindling Town funding.